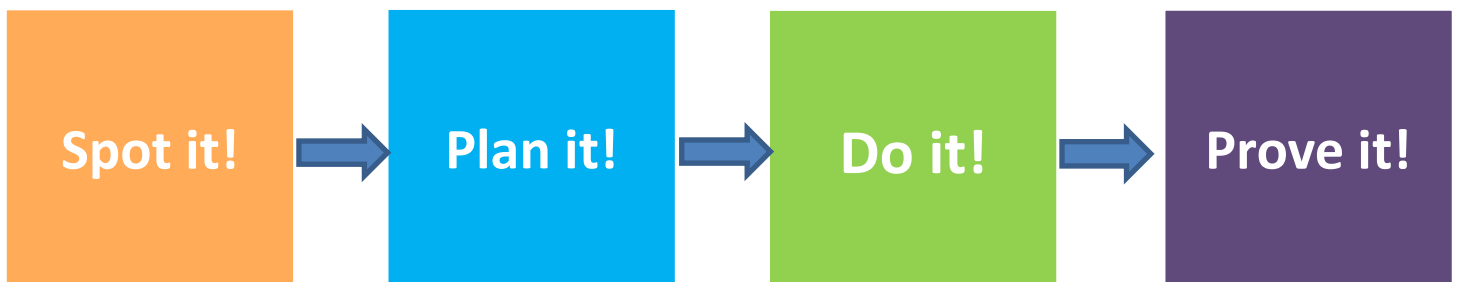


# A Guide to the 4 Steps of a Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover

This guide will walk you through the 4 steps to a Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover!

Pilot

Summer/Fall 2016



## Step 1: Spot it!

Getting ready to make some Smarter Lunchroom changes? Excellent! Before you make any changes, take a close look at your cafeteria to help spot what changes you need to make.

The information you gather will vary by school, however, it is important to know how a lunchroom stands before any interventions occur, in order to later determine how things have changed. Pick and choose the methods that work for you.

### Ways to Spot changes you may want to make:

- Smarter Lunchroom Scorecard
- Photos
- Student Surveys

### COMPLETE THE SMARTER LUNCHROOM SCORECARD:

Complete a Smarter Lunchroom Scorecard before you make any changes.

#### 1. Complete the Scorecard:

- Record day, time, lunch period, and person completing scorecard on each page.
- Arrive 20 minutes before students arrive for lunch. Become familiar with where the entrances and exits are. Identify the serving and dining areas. Look at where the trash, tray return, and recycling are located. Observe any decorations on the walls, tables, or service lines.
- Walk through using the same footpath the students use. Look around carefully, smell the air, and try to get a sense of the students' experience in the space. Walk through again, this time making a check mark in the box beside each item that you observe. Write any additional observations or notes legibly in the margin.
- Watch as students enter the cafeteria. Continue to make observations and check items on the scorecard that you observe.



- Continue to observe while the first lunch period ends. See how the serving area is cleaned and replenished for the next period.
- Use the second lunch period to continue observing and checking off items on the scorecard.
- Review the scorecard one more time to make sure you have checked off everything you have observed. Some questions need to be answered with the help of the School Nutrition Director or manager, so be sure to check in (after the lunch periods!) to get the answers.
- Tally the check marks and write the total score.

Spot it!

This total score is your baseline. It's your starting point. Everything you didn't check off is an a strategy you can try!

**TIP:** Engage stakeholders! Are other people always asking about your cafeteria? Wanting to make changes or always offering suggestions? Pull them in the loop! Invite diverse stakeholders to complete the scorecard with you or for you. It's a great discussion starter and relationship builder.

Examples of different people to ask to complete a scorecard include:

- School Nutrition Director
- School administrator
- Lunchroom staff member
- Teacher or other school staff member
- Parent (or PTA member)
- Student (student council member)

Give each observer the scorecard ahead of time so they can read it and ask questions as needed before they begin. The observation period goes by quickly. Each observer should be familiar with the scorecard so they can spend most of the observation period looking at the lunchroom, not searching for items on the scorecard!



Spot it!

## TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Take photographs during the observation. If possible, let teams of observers go through the lunchroom together: one will complete the scorecard while the other takes photographs.
  - Plan to take 25-30 photos.
  - Take photographs when food is on the line.
  - Take them from students' eye level, especially in elementary schools.
  - For legal reasons, avoid photographing students or collect signed consent forms. Ask before photographing adults.

Key locations to photograph:

- ☐ Overall view of area, 'first glance'
  - ☐ Hot food serving area
  - ☐ Cold food serving area
  - ☐ Any decorations, signs, or posters
  - ☐ Posted menus or promotions
  - ☐ Wall space – used or unused
  - ☐ Lighting
  - ☐ Walls, esp. where students line up
  - ☐ Registers and surrounding view
  - ☐ Milk serving area
  - ☐ Tray storage
  - ☐ Cutlery storage
  - ☐ Condiments
  - ☐ Salad bar
  - ☐ Beverage coolers – open and closed
  - ☐ Ice cream cooler – open and closed
  - ☐ Trash, compost, and recycling areas
  - ☐ Tray return
  - ☐ Cleaning items – mops, brooms, buckets, cloths, if visible to students
2. Make a folder for your photos. Label with location, description, and date. Put the photos into a Power Point Presentation for easy group review.

IT'S NOT NUTRITION  
UNTIL IT'S EATEN



3. Get a group together to review the photos. What looks great? Where is there room for improvement? Take notes.

## CONDUCT STUDENT SURVEYS

Students are your customers! Take the time to find out what they like - and don't like - about the cafeteria. Their responses can help you spot problem areas that you may have never thought of.

Spot it!

**Here are some things to consider before you begin to develop a student survey:**

- What age group do you want to survey?
- Do you want students to take the survey on paper or electronically?
- Do you want every student to take the survey or just students who eat school lunch?
- Do you want students to take the survey in the cafeteria or in the classroom?
- How will you compile and review the responses?





## Step 2: Plan it!

Plan it!

### Smarter Lunchroom Action Plan

1. Review your Smarter Lunchroom Scorecard results and look closely at the photos of the lunchroom.
2. Choose 3-5 Smarter Lunchroom Strategies to try.
3. Create a plan for each strategy.

#### Example Completed Action Plan (Blank on next page)

Focus Area*	Smarter Lunchroom Strategy	Permission Needed? Whose?	Tasks	Person Responsible	Due by
Fruit	Daily fruit options are written on menu boards in all service areas and dining rooms.	Yes, Sally, School Nutrition Director	Ask Sally to purchase dry erase menu boards for service line.	Kathy, manager	9/1/16
			Place menu boards in selected locations.	Kathy, manager	10/1/16
			Write all fruit options on menu boards each day.	Martha, server	10/2/16





\*The 10 focus areas on the scorecard are: Fruit; Vegetables; White Milk; Entrees; Reimbursable Meals; Signage and Communication; Lunchroom Atmosphere; Student Involvement; Recognition and Support of School Food; A La Carte.

## Smarter Lunchroom Action Plan

1. Review your Smarter Lunchroom Scorecard results and look closely at the photos of the lunchroom.
2. Choose 3-5 Smarter Lunchroom Strategies to try.
3. Create a plan for each strategy.

**Plan it!**

Focus Area	Smarter Lunchroom Strategy	Permission Needed? Whose?	Tasks	Person Responsible	Due by





Focus Area	Smarter Lunchroom Strategy	Permission Needed? Whose?	Tasks	Person Responsible	Due by

Focus Area	Smarter Lunchroom Strategy	Permission Needed? Whose?	Tasks	Person Responsible	Due by



Do it!

## Step 3: Do it!

You have spotted what needs to be done by completing a Smarter Lunchroom Scorecard and taking a close look at photos of the lunchroom. You've taken the time to build a plan, so NOW is the time to Do it!

1. Be sure everyone on the lunchroom staff is aware of the changes that are going to be made. Give them the opportunity to ask questions and offer suggestions to the plan.
2. If the change is big, such as only accepting cash for a la carte options, go back and make sure communication and training is a part of your plan!
3. Make the changes!
  - Small changes can be made overnight or over the weekend.
  - Larger changes are better made over the summer or after a vacation.

IT'S NOT NUTRITION  
UNTIL IT'S EATEN



## Step 4: Prove it!

Give yourself a pat on the back! You did it! You spotted what needed to change, you made a plan, and you did it! Now it's time to show off your improvements!

### 1. Complete the Smarter Lunchroom Scorecard.

- Get your new Smarter Lunchroom score by repeating the instructions in Step 1 on how to complete the scorecard.

### 2. Take your after-photos.

- A picture speaks a thousand words. Take photos of the same locations you did prior to making a change.
- Save, date, and label photos.

After all your planning and doing, your Smarter Lunchroom Scorecard score increased and your photos visually show your improvements. Give yourself and your staff a pat on the back. Your lunchroom now uses evidenced-based research to help 'nudge' kids to make healthy choices.

**Keep up the great work!**

